

Llanwrtyd Wells Urban District

Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the year 1953.



Officials.

Medical Officer of Health...T.C.R.George, M.R.C.S.,
L.R.C.P.
D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector.....Mr.H.Thomas, M.S.I.A.

and Mr.A.E.Sweeting, Cert.S.I.B.

Llanwrtyd Wells Urban District

Report of the Medical Officer of Health

1953

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions and the state of the public health in the Llanwrtyd Wells Urban District for the year 1953.

In the preparation of this report I have endeavoured to deal briefly with all matters within my responsibility regarding public health and preventive medicine and I have included all the subjects specifically requested by the Welsh Board of Health in Circular 1/54 (Wales).

Section 1. General and Vital Statistics.

Statistical Summary for the year 1953.

Area.....1673 acres.
Population (Census 1951).....560.
Population (Estimated at Midsummer 1953).....546.
Number of inhabited houses.....186.

Live Births	Males	Females	Total	Rate per 1000 pop.
Legitimate	5	3	8	
Illegitimate	0	0	0	
	5	3	8	14.6

Still Births.	0	0	0	0.
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Deaths from all causes.	5	5	10	18.
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Maternal Deaths.....Nil.

Deaths under 1 year
.....0. Rate per 1000 live births.....0.

Deaths from special causes;
Infectious disease.....Nil.
Tuberculosis respiratory system.....Nil.
Other tuberculous disease.....Nil.
Cancer.....One.

Area.

The Urban District of Llanwrtyd Wells forms part of the County of Brecon and is situated in the northern part of the County. The surrounding country is agricultural in nature and farming is the predominant occupation of the inhabitants. The Urban District is a well known holiday resort where advantage is taken of the medicinal springs in the locality.

Population. Census 1931.....742.
 Census 1951.....560.

1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.	1950.	1951.	1952.	1953.
870.	912.	830.	632.	618.	640.	682.	660.	562.	552.	546.

The above figures are the Registrar General's estimated figures for the various years.

The number of inhabited houses was 186 giving an average number of 2.9 persons per house.

<u>Births.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1939.....	4.....	.....	4.....	6.2.
1940.....	4.....	3.....	7.....	6.8.
1941.....	4.....	1.....	5.....	4.4.
1942.....	2.....	2.....	4.....	4.0.
1943.....	3.....	1.....	4.....	4.5.
1944.....	2.....	3.....	5.....	4.5.
1945.....	5.....	4.....	9.....	10.8.
1946.....	3.....	2.....	5.....	7.9.
1947.....	3.....	5.....	8.....	12.9.
1948.....	5.....	3.....	8.....	12.5.
1949.....	4.....	4.....	8.....	11.7.
1950.....	2.....	3.....	5.....	7.5.
1951.....	10.....	3.....	13.....	23.1.
1952.....	3.....	0.....	3.....	5.4.
1953.....	5.....	3.....	8.....	14.6.
England and Wales, 1953.....	.....	.....	.....	15.5.

It will be observed that the birthrate for the year under review was lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales and was also lower than the deathrate for the district.

Deaths. After taking into account the outwardly and inwardly transferable deaths the net number of deaths registered amongst the residents of the district is shown in the following table.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1939.....	.....	.....	13.....	18.4.
1940.....	10.....	5.....	15.....	14.6.
1941.....	6.....	6.....	12.....	10.5.
1942.....	6.....	5.....	11.....	11.0.
1943.....	6.....	9.....	15.....	17.2.
1944.....	7.....	4.....	11.....	12.0.
1945.....	7.....	5.....	12.....	14.4.
1946.....	2.....	6.....	8.....	12.6.
1947.....	7.....	4.....	11.....	17.7.
1948.....	4.....	6.....	10.....	15.6.
1949.....	5.....	8.....	13.....	19.0.
1950.....	10.....	5.....	15.....	22.7.
1951.....	4.....	2.....	6.....	10.6.
1952.....	5.....	6.....	11.....	19.9.
1953.....	5.....	5.....	10.....	18.0.
England and Wales, 1953.....	.....	.....	.....	11.4.

The deathrate for 1953 was therefore higher than the average for the whole of England and Wales, and also much higher than the birthrate for the district.

Still Births. There was no still birth registered during the year.

Infantile Mortality. This is the number of deaths occurring in children of under one year of age. The rate is calculated per 1000 live births. There were no deaths registered in children of under one year of age during the year.

	<u>Rate</u>
England and Wales, 1953.....	26.8.
There were no deaths in children of under 4 weeks of age.	

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Analysis of Causes of Deaths. Males.....5. Females.....5.

<u>Cause.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Malignant neoplasms.....	1.....	0.
Coronary disease.....	2.....	1.
Vascular lesions of nervous system.....	0.....	1.
Other heart disease.....	2.....	3.

The deaths are classified under the headings given in the new Abridged List of Causes of Deaths.

Illegitimacy. There was no illegitimate birth registered in the district during the year.

Maternal Mortality. There was no death during the year which could be attributed to childbirth.

Section 2. General Provisions of Health Services.
Mr.H.Thomas, the Sanitary Inspector,terminated his appointment with the Council at the end of September 1953,and the vacancy was filled by the appointment of Mr.A.E.Sweeting,who commenced duties on 1st.December 1953.

Laboratory Facilities. During the year laboratory facilities were available at Cardiff,Newport,Carmarthen, Swansea,Aberystwyth and Brecon.The laboratory of the Public Analyst for the County of Carmarthen was available for water samples whilst any investigation required in the control of infectious disease was performed by the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff.

Ambulance Facilities. As a result of the National Health Service Act,1946,the County Council were responsible for the provision of an ambulance service and made use of the existing St.John's ambulance for general use while ambulances from Merthyr Isolation Hospital conveyed patients suffering from infectious disease to hospital.

Home Nursing.Under the new Health Act,the County Council were responsible for the provision of home nursing facilities. The nurses previously partly employed by various district nursing associations were whole time employees of the County Council.

Treatment Centres and Clinics.Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics administered by the County Council are held regularly at the War Memorial Institute.Facilities for the treatment of minor ailments,immunisation,dental,eye and orthopaedic defects are available at the County Health Offices.

Hospitals. The hospital needs of the residents of the district,for all diseases apart from infectious disease,are provided by the local hospital at Builth Wells.

The arrangements for the treatment of infectious disease remain the same as in previous years.Merthyr Borough Council treat the patients from the district suffering from infectious disease and these are conveyed to Merthyr in ambulances maintained by Merthyr. These arrangements are proving extremely satisfactory.

For the treatment of smallpox cases arrangements have been made by the Welsh Board of Health for beds to be available at the Penrhys Hospital,Rhondda.

Disinfection. The methods used for any required disinfection have been fumigation and spraying.

Section 3. Maternity and Child Welfare. These services are administered by the County Council and include clinics for maternity and child welfare, immunisation, dental, eye and orthopaedic treatment. Provision is also made for the supply of free and cheap rate milk and medicinal foods. The supervision of midwives, child life protection and the care of premature and illegitimate infants is also the responsibility of the County Council.

Section 4. Sanitary Circumstances.

Water Supply. Water supplied to the district is derived from five sources as follows:-

Nant-Llegdwial Brook. Water is abstracted from the stream which drains upland peaty land used for sheep grazing. Owing to the fact that the storage reservoir here is now completely out of action the water runs directly into a gravity sand filter bed. The main trunk to the town connects this filter to Victoria Service Reservoir.

Nant Gyrnant Brook. This is a tributary supply taken directly from the brook, which drains similar land to the Nant-Llegdwial, and is passed into the main trunk Waun-coli - Victoria Service reservoir without treatment. This supply is only used during drought periods or when due to influx of visitors the other sources are inadequate for the needs of the population.

Victoria Level. Here a well sunk in the end of a heading about 60 yards long in the hillside overflows and the water is retained by a small dam at the entrance to the heading. It is supplemented by some water percolating through the roof of the heading. This water is passed via a small collecting chamber into the Victoria Service Reservoir.

Victoria Springs. A land spring above Victoria Service Reservoir is piped to a collecting chamber mentioned above.

Ffos Fign. Water is derived from a number of land springs, piped to a collecting chamber which is connected to the Loft-wen Service Reservoir.

The water from both service reservoirs ultimately intermix in the distribution pipes.

The general conditions of water installations is unsatisfactory. Due to the waters action on metal, all water mains, hydrants and control valves are encrusted to such an extent that in a number of places the bore of the 3" main is reduced to $1\frac{3}{4}$ ". The Waun-coli storage reservoir is badly cracked and must therefore be regarded as being completely useless. For similar reasons the filter beds have only received the necessary scraping once in the last 10 years and undoubtedly their efficiency is greatly reduced.

Quantity. During the year the supply was adequate in quantity but the same difficulty as previously mentioned was experienced in supplying the upper reaches of the town. No special work was done on water supplies during the year with the exception of the repair of a fracture found in the main from Loftwen.

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No samples of water were examined during the year. Previous samples showed that the water has some plumbo solvent action and the matter is in the hands of a consulting engineer. No action was taken in respect of any contamination other than the routine cleansing of tanks and reservoirs and the maintenance of fences surrounding the reservoir.

Number of dwelling houses connected to public supply.....	151.
Estimated population supplied.....	437.
Number of houses supplied by standpipes.....	7.
Number of houses supplied by private supplies.....	28.
Population supplied by private supplies.....	81.

A scheme for an improved supply to the district was considered during the year and it is hoped that there will be as little delay as possible in bringing a scheme to completion as, in my opinion, the district is not adequately served as regards quantity under the present system whilst the methods used to ensure purity could definitely be improved.

Number of visits of inspection made.....	74.
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Drainage and Sewerage. The sewage disposal works, constructed in 1932, consists of two screening chambers and detritus tanks, storm water overflow and storm water tank, two vertical flow sedimentation tanks, automatic dosing chamber, two rotary filter beds, two horizontal flow humus tanks and six sludge drying beds. On the whole this system worked satisfactory during the year.

Number of inspections made.....	7.
Number of houses connected to sewer.....	173.
Number of houses with cesspools.....	5.
Number of houses with pail closets.....	26.

Public Cleansing. There was no change in the methods adopted for the collection and disposal of house refuse. This is collected twice weekly by a contractor in the district and disposed of by tipping. There was some slight improvement in the methods used for disposal.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area. The sanitary inspection of the area was undertaken by the Sanitary Inspector. The following details give information relating to the work of the sanitary inspector during the year.

<u>Nuisances.</u>	
Number of complaints received.....	5.
Number of complaints investigated.....	5.
Number of promises inspected.....	18.
Number of revisits to premises.....	33.
Number of preliminary notices served.....	0.
Number of abatement notices served.....	2.

Houses let in lodgings. It is not considered that any of the houses in the district are of such a nature as to require control under byclaws made under Section 6 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Offensive Trades. There was no offensive trade in the district.

Common Lodging Houses. No common lodging houses exist in the district.

Licensed Premises.

Number of inspections made by sanitary inspector.....	37.
Number of notices served.....	0.

Shops.

Number of inspections made by sanitary inspector.....9.
 Number of notices served.....0.

Factories.

Number of factories in the district.....9.
 Number of visits of inspection made.....48.
 Number of notices served.....0.
 Number of defects found.....0.

Camping Sites. There are no recognised camping sites in the district.

Eradication of bed bugs and steps taken to combat infestation.

No premises were found to be verminous during the year.

Rodent Control. This work is performed by a Council workman.

Number of premises inspected.....55.
 Number found infested.....18.
 Number of rats killed (Estimated).....71.

The sewers were also treated during February of the year, when no baits were taken. Fourteen manholes were baited.

Legal Proceedings. No legal action was taken during the year.

Tents, Vans and Sheds.

Number of visits.....0.
 Number of notices.....0.

Section 5. Housing.

No Council or private houses were built during the year. Judging by the applications received for tenancies of the Council houses, the housing need of the district is not great.

No applications for improvement grants were received during the year.

Section 6. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

In connection with clean food no educational activity occurred during the year.

The number of food retailers, by type, in the district were:-

3 butchers, 3 provisions and bakery, 1 green grocer and tinned foods, 1 green grocer and provisions, 2 tinned foods, 1 provisions.

Foods & Drugs Act, 1938. Section 14. The premises registered under this section were 4 ice cream premises and 3 butchers.

Milk. Since the coming into operation of the Milk and Dairies Act, 1944, the Council is left with the registration and supervision of milk distributors. The results of samples taken during the year are shown below:-

Number of visits made to cowsheds and dairies.....0.
 Number of sample results received during the year.....10.
 Number of samples in satisfactory category.....8.
 Number of samples in satisfactory category.....2.

Meat. There is no slaughterhouse in the district and meat is supplied to the district from the Ministry of Food Slaughtering Point at Builth Wells.

No meat was condemned in the district during the year but 47 pounds of various foodstuffs were condemned. This food was in tins which were returned to the wholesalers by the retailers in order that replacements could be made.

Other Foods.

Food Preparation Rooms, including Bakehouses.

Number of inspections made by sanitary inspector.....32.

Ice Cream Premises. In view of the occurrence of infectious disease caused by ice cream 7 visits of inspection were made by the Sanitary Inspector.

Number of producer retailers.....1.
 Number of retailers only.....3.
 The only producer of ice cream in the district complies fully with the Heat Treatment Regulations.

Preserved Food Premises.

Number of inspections.....5.

Fried Fish Shops. There was no fried fish shop in the district during the year.

Section 7. Prevalence and Control of Infectious Disease.

The following cases of notifiable disease were reported to me during the year.

Whooping Cough.....1 case.

The district was therefore free of any epidemic of infectious disease.

Venereal Disease. The County Council has an agreement with the General and Eye Hospital, Swansea, for the treatment of such cases. The tracing of contacts and the following up of defaulters is the responsibility of the County Council.

Tuberculosis. The following details show the position as regards tuberculosis in recent years.

Number of cases on register at commencement of year.....3.
 Number of fresh cases notified during the year.....0.
 Number of cases removed as deceased.....0.
 Number of cases removed as "left district".....1.
 Number of cases remaining on register at end of year.....2.

The number of notifications in recent years is shown below;

1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.	1950.	1951.	1952.	1953.
1.	1.	0.	1.	1.	0.	0.	2.	0.	1.	0.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

As a result of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council were responsible for the immunisation of children against diphtheria and details for the district will be found in the annual report of the County Medical Officer of Health.

Facilities for immunisation are now available at the ordinary Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics and also at the schools during the school medical inspections.

It is pleasing to see that the incidence of diphtheria continues to fall. The object of the immunisation campaign, however, remain the same: to secure the immunisation of not less than 75% of babies before their first birthday. During the first half of 1953, however, it is disturbing to note that only 31% of the estimated number of children reaching the age of one year during this period received this protection. It must be remembered that diphtheria still kills and that elimination of the disease is conditional upon the maintenance of an adequate level of immunisation. If parents leave their children unprotected there may be a return of diphtheria outbreaks, and there have been several sharp reminders of this possibility during the year under review.

Yours faithfully,

T.C.R. George,

Medical Officer of Health.